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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2344

January 7, 1988

ADVANCE PAYMENTS

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, eligible 1987 crop wheat producers may receive in advance 75 percent of their estimated emergency compensation payment, also known as "Findley" payments. It's estimated the total payment rate will be 25 cents per bushel with the advance portion to be 18-3/4 cents per bushel. The advance payments will be made in generic commodity certificates as soon as possible.

EXPORT ADVANCE, IMPORTS DROP

For the first time in nearly a decade, U.S. agricultural exports rose in both value and volume in fiscal 1987, gaining 4 billion 600 million dollars, and 20 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Imports fell in fiscal 1987 for the first time in 5 years. U.S. agricultural exports to the European Community rose 5 percent in fiscal 1987, after 4 years of decline, to 6 billion 800 million dollars.

SIGN-UP FOR FARM PROGRAMS

According to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng, the sign-up for the 1988 wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice programs will be from Feb. 16 through April 15, 1988. Provisions of the programs will be announced as soon as possible.

SUPPORT PRICE FOR MILK REDUCED

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng reduced the national support price for milk on January 1 from \$11.10 to \$10.60 per hundredweight. The Secretary is required by law to reduce the support price on January 1 if he estimated that net purchases by the Commodity Credit Corporation under the dairy price support program in calendar year 1988 will exceed five billion pounds of milk equivalent and certain other conditions specified in the law are met.

U.S. GRAIN EXPORTS RECOVERING

The current season forecasts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture of U.S. grain exports continue to show strong growth for wheat, sorghum, rice, corn and barley. The world import demand for wheat in 1987/88 is forecast to rise 8 million 800 thousand tons from a year ago due to the Soviet Union and China's increased import demand of a combined total 7 million tons, while the Canadian exports are forecast to fall 2 million 300 thousand tons and the European Community's exports to fall 2 million tons respectively. As a result, the U.S. export level is expected to increase by 41 percent to 40 million tons.

EC WHEAT SALES TO USSR

The European Community continues to actively pursue the Soviet wheat market as indicated by recent low-priced sales of 650,000 tons of EC feed wheat and 1 million tons of bread wheat out of West German intervention stocks to that market, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The bread wheat was reportedly sold at \$84/ton, FOB, which is sharply below recent prices on sales from the United States, Argentina and other origins, even after appropriate allowance for quality and freight difference. There have also been indications that the USSR earlier purchased about 850,000 tons of barley, and that the Soviets are now negotiating for some 500,000 tons of feed wheat and an additional 1 million tons of barley.

WORLD DEMAND FOR CORN TO RISE

The world import demand for corn is forecast to rise in 1987/88, while foreign exportable supplies are forecast to fall, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The world import demand for corn is forecast to increase by 1 million 700 thousand tons with major increases in Japan, Eastern Europe, and South Korea. However, with major U.S. competitors' exportable supplies forecast to fall by 3 million 300 thousand tons, the U.S. corn exports are forecast to increase by 10 percent to 43 million 200 thousand tons as a result.

U.S. WHEAT EXPORT FORECAST

The U.S. wheat export forecast for 1987/88 was raised to 39 million 500 thousand tons on December 10 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is 2 million 700 thousand tons over November's forecast and 12 million tons over the 1986/87 export level. As of December 10, wheat shipments and sales for 1987/88 totaled 27 million 300 thousand tons, compared to 18 million 700 thousand tons at the same time a year ago.

U.S. WHEAT TO FINLAND?

Finland has the smallest wheat crop in 6 years and consequently the country will export less and import more. Finland's import needs, now estimated at 70,000 tons, would double last year's level. Recent reports indicate that imports of bread-making wheat will be necessary. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Finland has already purchased 40,000 tons of wheat from the U.S. under the Export Enhancement Program, and a balance of 10,000 tons remains available.

LARGE WHEAT CROP IN BRAZIL

Prospects for the largest wheat crop ever in Brazil are further reducing Brazil's 1987/88 wheat import requirements, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Wheat imports, at 2 million 200 thousand tons, are expected to be down 20 percent from last year and the smallest in 13 years. There appears to be little room for additional sales by the United States, despite offers of wheat under the Enhancement Program and available GSM-102 credit.

TWO YEARS TO RETAIN BENEFITS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is reminding farmers with highly erodible cropland that they have just two years to meet the conservation requirements of the 1985 Farm Bill and remain eligible for USDA program benefits. Farmers with highly erodible land are required to have a conservation plan approved by their local conservation district by December 31, 1989, and have it implemented by December 31, 1994. As of October 1, 1987, only 20 percent of highly erodible cropland was under a conservation plan. The goal is 65 percent by the end of 1988 and the rest by the end of 1989.

CANADIAN 1988
FARM ASSISTANCE

The Canadian Government recently announced its 1988 farm support initiatives which include a reported \$1 billion 500 million payment to all farmers and a \$100 million increase over the amount budgeted for grains in the previous year. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this represents a second year of huge subsidies to help soften the effects of lower world grain prices.

RECORD SUBSIDIES
IN CANADA

The total payments under Canada's Western Grain Stabilization Program reached 1 billion 400 million Canadian dollars for the 1986/87 crop year, a 62.7 percent increase over the payout in the previous year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The office of the Canadian Minister of Grains and Oilseeds reports that the 1986/87 payout returned Canadian \$13.55 in benefits for every Canadian dollar of levy a farmer paid into the program during the past three crop years. Benefits received by farmers who have paid the maximum levy of Canadian \$2,100 over the past three years will realize a total 1986/87 benefit of Canadian \$28,000.

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1597...(Weekly 13½ min documentary)
International trade fairs are directly responsible for boosting sales of U.S. farm exports. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Chris Larson highlights the Anuga Food Show in West Germany.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1585...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Wheat payments; New safety standards for grain elevators; A financial boost to the Farm Credit System; The oats shortage.

CONSUMER TIME #1077...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) New biotechnology office at USDA; Entering export markets; The economic impact of divorce; Preparing game birds; Burnout: What is it??

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE... Thurs, Jan. 14, World ag. supply and demand, Crop production report, Grain stocks reports; Fri, Jan. 15, World ag. production, World oilseed situation, World cotton situation, Milk production; Tues, Jan. 19, Livestock and poultry outlook; Wed, Jan. 20, Catfish production report. Dial the National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 9X

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Friday 11:00 a.m. ET.

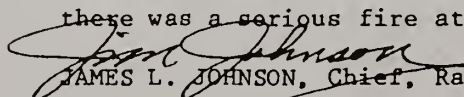
OFF MIKE

Nice "Happy Holiday" card from Robin Kinney who is no longer with KMOM in Monticello, MN, but is working with Lynn Ketelsen and Jeff Gould at the Linder Farm Net in Willmar, MN ... We have a celebrity in our own ranks. Larry Collins, who became our radio production assistant when we switched from reel-to-reel tape to cassettes for distributing our radio programs (he supervised the reel-to-reel tape duplicating and mailing operation), was featured in the latest USDA Ag Reporter. The feature story and photograph put the spotlight on his weekend work as sound man and state manager for Mother's Band, a group of professionals that play at prisons, homes for wayward boys and girls, senior citizens, and nursing homes as a public service. Larry's been doing it for 11 years, and we're mighty proud of him ... Old files die hard, that's what our Margaret Desatnik learned recently. Margaret's been writing a monthly radio script service for a lot of years, and people tend to save them. Just how long was pointed up the other day when she

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received a letter from Dick Delano garden editor of the Chicago Sun-Times asking for information about miniature rose growing talked about in a "...radio press release." Margaret started checking and found the release in question was from her March, 1978, radio script service!! ... We almost missed it, but something made us check the photo on page 78 of the Dec. 21 Broadcasting magazine. Sure enough one of those in the picture was Layne Beary (retired Chief USDA Radio-TV). The picture was of the newly elected Broadcast Pioneers Educational Fund board of directors ... Speaking of pictures, we were looking through the December Mid-Am Reporter magazine and there was Kathy Patton (WIBW, Topeka, KS). She's the latest farm broadcaster to be profiled and saluted by the magazine's editor Forrest Bradley. Incidentally the magazine also carried a picture of Tom Hoy (Nat'l Rural Elec Coop Assoc, Wash. D.C.) receiving his NAFB Meritorious Service Award. No details, but we understand there was a serious fire at NRECA. No one answers the phone.


JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief, Radio and Television Division